

Acknowledgments

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BATES COLLEGE

KAREN NICOLETTI PROGRAM



OLIN ARTS CENTER
SUNDAY
MARCH 18, 2012
3:00 P.M.

Program Notes



The program for this recital was built around the idea of program music, or music that expresses some kind of extra-musical narrative. The pieces selected were ones that would present a range of possibilities of music referring to something outside itself. Some of the pieces were written to follow a narrative, reflect a poem, or reproduce elements of nature. Others have more distant programmatic themes, reflecting the identity of the composer or the musical style of the time period, or gesture at other art forms as a whole, such as poetry. This range allows for a variety of performance approaches within a single program.

J.S. Bach's *Sonata in E-Flat Major* represents one end of the spectrum, as a piece with no explicit extra-musical elements. Yet its place in the Baroque era of music, and more specifically its galant style, provides the performer with a good deal of stylistic approaches to consider. Claude Debussy's *Syrinx* was written as incidental music for Gabriel Mourey's uncompleted play *Psyché*, and follows the myth of Pan and Syrinx, in which the god Pan pursues Syrinx, a nymph. When Syrinx hides from him by turning herself into water reeds, Pan cuts the reeds to make a pipe, unwittingly killing his love. Ernest Bloch's *Suite Modale* also carries no explicit programmatic content, but Bloch was a composer known for his expression of his Jewish identity in his music. Although the *Suite Modale* is very French in style, there are moments when his compositional style reveals elements of his Jewish identity. *Le Merle Noir*, composed by Olivier Messiaen, which was originally written as a competition piece for the Paris Conservatory, is composed from a collection of transcriptions of birdsong of the blackbird. *Prelude to "The Afternoon of a Faun"*, another work of Claude Debussy, was composed in response to Stéphane Mallarmé's poem "The Afternoon of a Faun", in which a faun wakes from a dream about two beautiful nymphs, muses on the passion he may or may not have shared with them, and eventually resigns himself to return to sleep. Charles Griffes was an American composer known to seek out poems as an inspiration for his compositions. Although there is no poem known to have inspired his piece for flute titled *Poem*, the piece develops with a lyric progression of emotion that gestures at poetry's artistic form.

Karen Nicoletti Senior Recital Program

Flute Sonata in E-Flat Major J. S. Bach
(1685-1750)

Chiharu Naruse, piano

Syrinx Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

Suite Modale Ernest Bloch
(1880-1959)

Chiharu Naruse, piano

Le Merle Noir Olivier Messiaen
(1908-1992)

Chiharu Naruse, piano

~Brief Intermission~

Prelude to "The Afternoon of a Faun" Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

Hope Staneski, clarinet
Chiharu Naruse, piano

Poem Charles Griffes
(1884-1920)

Chiharu Naruse, piano

